

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An image taking apparatus, comprising:  
an image pick-up element which picks up images;  
a controller which controls the image picked up by the image pick-up element so as to pick up a plurality of images of an object different in photographing condition;  
an image memory which temporarily stores said plurality of images picked up by said image pick-up element;  
an image-number-specifying device which specifies the number of images to be used for creating a composite image of the object from among said plurality of images stored in said image memory; and  
an image composer which creates said composite image by composing images of said number of images specified by said image-number-specifying device.
2. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the number of images to be stored in said image memory is decided by capacity of said image memory and image size.
3. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the number of images to be stored in said image memory is the maximum number of images to be stored in said image memory.
4. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising a display for displaying said plurality of images stored in said image memory side by side.

5. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising a selector for specifying one of photographing modes and a controller for automatically setting the number of images to be stored in said image memory depending on a specified photographing mode.

6. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 5, wherein said photographing modes include a mode which gives priority to quality of image and a mode which gives priority to speed.

7. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 6, wherein the number of images to be stored in said image memory is the maximum number of images that said image memory can store when said mode which give priority to quality of image is specified.

8. (Currently Amended) An image taking apparatus, comprising:  
an image pick-up element which picks up a plurality of images different in photographing condition;  
a reception part for accepting a voluntary selection by a user between one of image quality priority and processing speed priority;  
an image-pick-up-number controller which variably sets a number of images to be picked up by said image pick-up element, said number being set according to ~~relative~~ priorities accepted priority of image quality ~~and~~ or processing speed; and  
an image composer which creates a composite image by composing the number of images set by said image-pick-up-number controller.

9. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 8, further comprising an image memory which temporarily stores a plurality of images picked up by said image pick-up element.

10. (Original) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 9, wherein the number of images to be set by said image-pick-up-number controller is the maximum number that said image memory can store.

11. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 9, wherein the number of pixels to be picked up is capable of being specified, and wherein the number of images to be set by said image-pick-up-number controller is determined by a number of pixels specified and a capacity of said image memory.

12. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 9, further comprising a controller which discriminates whether it is possible to store images by the number of images set by said image-pick-up-number controller in said image memory, and controls said image pick-up element so as not to pick up images when it is discriminated to be impossible to store said images.

13. (Currently Amended) An image taking apparatus, comprising:  
an image pick-up element which picks up images;  
a controller which controls the image picked up by the image pick-up element so as to pick up a plurality of images of an object different in photographing condition;  
an image memory which temporarily stores said plurality of images picked up by said image pick-up element;  
an image specifying device which specifies images to be used for creating a composite image of the object from among said plurality of images stored in said image memory; and  
an image composer which creates said composite image by composing the images specified by said image specifying device.

14. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein a number of images to be stored in said image memory is decided by capacity of said image memory and image size.

15. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein a number of images to be stored in said image memory is the maximum number of images said image memory can store.

16. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 13, further comprising a display for displaying said plurality of images stored in said image memory side by side.

17. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 13, further comprising a selector for specifying one of a plurality of photographing modes and a controller for automatically setting a number of images to be stored in said image memory depending on a specified photographing mode.

18. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein said plurality of photographing modes include a mode which gives priority to quality of image and a mode which gives priority to speed.

19. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 18, wherein a number of images to be stored in said image memory, when said mode which gives priority to quality of image is specified, is the maximum number of images that said image memory can store.

20. (Previously Presented) The image taking apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein a number of images to be specified by said image specifying device is specified by a user, and the image taking apparatus selects images to be used for creating a composite image from among images stored in said image memory depending on the specified number.